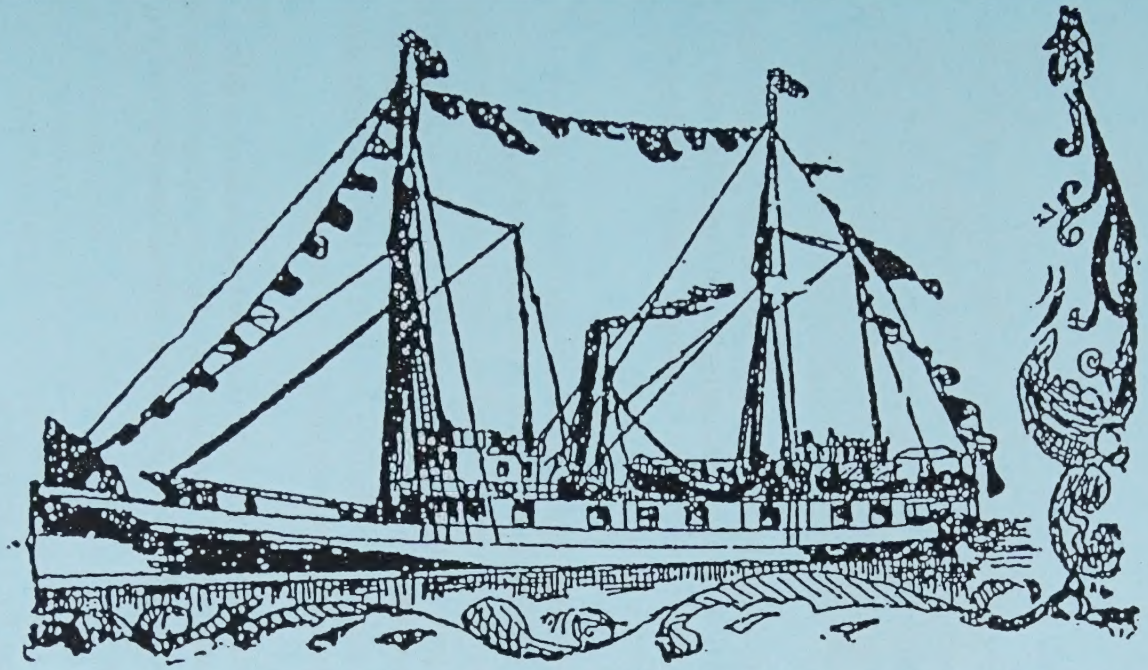


Former U.S.S. Manzanita as the Flagship of the 1909 Astoria Regatta

CAPTAIN'S HOUSES

August 7, 8, & 9 1 to 4 pm

1992 Astoria Regatta Historic Homes Tour

Ticket Price: $ 7.50 (Friday Only $ 5.00)

Welcome:

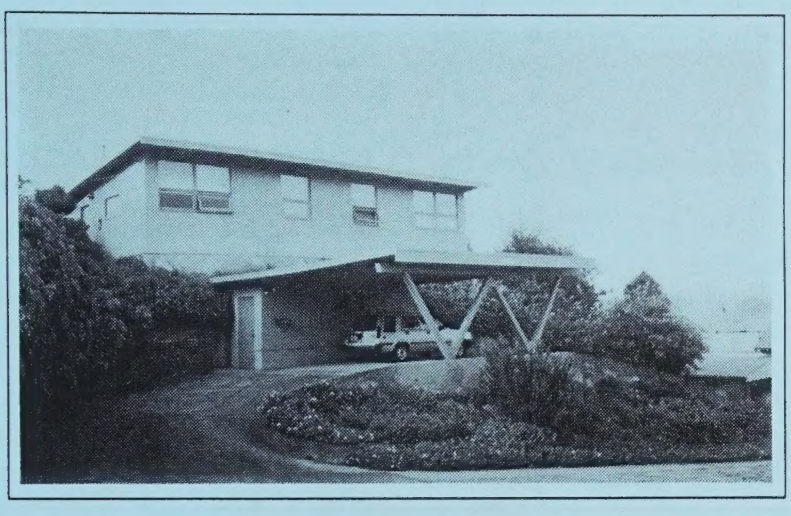
Clatsop County Historical Society invites you to tour some of Astoria's historic houses. Our theme this year, CAPTAIN'S HOUSES, was suggested as another way to observe the bicentennial of Capt. Robert Gray's discovery of the Columbia River

Next year all of Oregon will commemorate the Oregon Trail. We plan to feature houses associated with families who crossed the Rockies to settle in Clatsop County. We hope you will return for that experience.

We debated whether to include the Capt. George Flavel House (1885) on this tour. Flavel is considered the first Columbia River bar pilot -- receiving his license in 1850 from the territorial government. His business acumen made him Clatsop County's first millionaire. He built his mansion at 441 8th Street eight years before he died in 1893. The house is well described in a booklet sold at the museum.

Alas, we decided not to include the marvelous house this year since so many local people have already toured it, but if you show this program to the greeter, she will surely let you in free.

Bruce Berney, chairman
Historic Homes Tour Committee



1. Capt. Edgar Quinn House (1956)
390 Franklin Avenue

Capt. Quinn was born in 1911 in New York, but moved to Great Britain when he was a year old. In 1929 he became a sea cadet at San Francisco, then joined Matson Navigation Co. in 1936 as a licensed officer. During WWII, he commanded troop ships in every theater except the Mediterranean. He joined the Columbia River bar pilots in 1951. In March 1973, Capt. Quinn drowned after falling from a ship's ladder while transferring from a ship he had piloted across the Columbia River bar in a heavy storm.

The most modern house ever in our historic homes tours, it was designed by the local architects Wicks and Brown for the Quinns. Although modest from the street, the house faces the Columbia River through the largest window pane used in a residence in Astoria, up to that time. Capt. Quinn wanted to be able to sit in his living room and see his next ship to take over the bar as it came around Tongue Point, so he could scoot down to the dock without being telephoned. The owners specified that no plywood be used, so you will see solid hemlock beams, solid Honduras mahogany in the living room and solid exterior cedar siding.

Your hosts: Lynne Johnson
and Jerry Ostermiller, Executive Director
Columbia River Maritime Museum.

2. Capt. George C. Flavel House (1879)
818 Grand Avenue

(Drivers: We suggest you park near 8th & Harrison
and walk to houses 2, 3, & 4 in any order.)

George Conrad Flavel (1855-1923) was a native Astorian who inherited an interest in maritime activities from his famous father. After receiving his education locally and at a military academy in California, he went to sea. After he had acquired his captain's papers, he was persuaded by his parents to return to Astoria to work in the Flavel warf and towing business. At the death of his father in 1893, he became the manager of his father's estate, which included real estate investments as well as maritime interests.

When it was constructed, the younger Flavel's home was ideally situated across 8th Street from McClure School (grades 1-12). About 1905 the home was turned to its present exposure -- facing south and fronting Grand Avenue. The Flavels moved from the home in 1901 when their new Colonial Revival house at 15th and Franklin streets was completed.

The National Register house is currently being rehabilitated and is in a "state of transition." Its owner is Tom Hannen, one of Astoria's most talented commercial artists. We know you will enjoy his art on display, as well as the house in the rough.

3. Capt. Daniel J. McVicar House (1885)
643 Grand Avenue

Capt. McVicar (1855-1912) was born at Cape Breton. At the age of 13 he began sailing coastwise, two years later running to West Indian ports and Cuba, where he continued for four years. He reached San Francisco on the ship Carrie Reed in 1875. He came to the Columbia River on the ship Florida, and then worked on tugboats as mate and pilot for three or four years. His first command was for Capt. Flavel on the tug Mary Taylor which he joined in October 1880, leaving her early the following year to take the tug Astoria. He then followed bar piloting for a year, but returned to tugboats, handling the Sol Thomas for a few months, then commanding the Pioneer four years. (Information from marine History of the Pacific Northwest).

Historical records show that this house was originally built on the adjoining lot to the west, but moved in 1893 when McVicar built the newer house on that lot. Two other captains have lived here: James Keating of the launch Eagle in 1902, and Albert E. Beard (see last page) who lived here until 1914.

Your hosts:

George and Ella Willis

4. Capt. William E. Gregory House (1905)
1085 8th Street

Capt. Gregory was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1848 and came to New York in 1865, and commenced his marine career on coasting steamers. He followed the sea in the merchant service for over twenty years as third mate on the ships American Union, Plymouth Rock and New Freedom, and the Peruvian steamer Maria Louisa. In 1875 he was on the ship Garnet when she burned off Cape Horn and was picked up by the British ship Latona and landed in Bolivia. He came to the Columbia River on the bark Highland Light about 1885 and joined the U.S. Lighthouse tender Manzanita* and also commanded various other light-house tenders Columbine, Heather, and Armeria.

An item in the local paper on May 9, 1905, stated that Capt. W.E. Gregory was building a new house on the corner of 8th and Kensington. Built in the Federal Revival style of 1790, you will be interested in the current owners' efforts to extend the comfort and convience of the house into the 21st Century. In 1912 Capt. Gregory was transferred to Alaska. The house was sold to the principal of McClure School. In 1917, J.W. Branstator, principal of Central School, lived there. The Tennant family made it their home from 1920-1940.

Your hosts:

Kenton and Kay Cruzan, Astoria Middle School teachers

* Cover picture, Astoria Daily Budget, June 26, 1909.

5. Capt. Ray Collins House (1892)
682 34th Street

Capt. Collins was born in 1918 at Unalaska, Alaska, his father was installing Navy radio equipment at the time. He commanded ships in all parts of the oceans until joining the Columbia River Bar Pilots Association in 1960. He retired in 1983. Perhaps the highest point in his career was when he brought the Manhattan into the river in 1968 -- the largest tanker (960 ft.) in the world at the time. He is a past president of Clatsop County Historical Society and a current member of Astoria's Historic Landmarks Commission.

Historically known as the Gustav Holmes House for the salmon cannery owner born in Sessle, Sweden in 1846, it is now celebrating its centennial year. Holmes was one of the original stockholders in the Scandinavian Cannery which was one of the first cooperative canneries on the Columbia. In 1882 he formed a partnership with Andrew and Benjamin Young to build a salmon cannery on the Skeena River in B.C. which proved financially successful, as you can see. This house was inherited by his son who lived here until 1962 when the Collins family purchased it and raised their five children here.

Your hosts:

Keith and Genevieve Butenshon

NOTE:

Friday - Only Flavel House (FH) and houses 4 and 6 will be open.

Saturday & Sunday - house 6 will not be open.

6. Capt. Albert E. Beard House (1894)
566 Olney (just west of Fultano's Pizza)

Open on Friday Only

Responding to a request by Mrs. Buell for a history of the house, 91 year old Edward A. Beard wrote a seven page letter shortly before his death in 1986. He stated that:

"During the enormous flood of 1894 in the upper Columbia at or near Heppner, many houses, barns, and livestock came floating down the river and some of the wrecked buildings reached as far as Astoria. My father Capt. Albert Beard was living in Astoria and was part owner of a small steamboat named Sea-Foam. When the wrecked houses reached Astoria, Capt. Beard spotted one and towed it to Youngs Bay where it was dismantled and much lumber was used to build this house.

I lived in this house until I was about 12 years old when we moved to 643 Grand Ave. We lived there until I graduated from Astoria High School in 1914. (This house) then became the home of barber Joe Endicott for about 50 years." Mr. Beard reports that his mother was one of the three members of the first Astoria High School graduating class, 1893.

Your host:

Polly June Buell